

**SENATE—Monday, October 18, 1999**

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

**PRAYER**

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Dear Father, You created us with a family likeness, with a potential of emulating Your character. This week we celebrate "Character Counts Week." Thank You for the world leadership of this Senate in establishing this week in October to emphasize the six pillars of character so needed today: Trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Today we affirm how crucial are the character traits of trustworthiness, respect, and responsibility. We have learned from You what it means to be trustworthy. You are faithful, consistent, totally reliable, and absolutely true to Your promises.

God, we long to be people who are known for our integrity; that wonderful consistency between what we believe and what we do; that congruity of what we say and how we follow through. We also desire to be people who communicate respect and take responsibility for the natural world, for our Nation, and for the sacredness of the people around us. Each of us views Your particularized affirmation of our uniqueness. Help us to communicate that same respect for others. May this Senate be a shining example to America as men and women who are unreservedly trustworthy, respectful, and responsible in their leadership. Through them and all of us, strengthen the moral fiber of our Nation. In Your trustworthy name. Amen.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Honorable PAT ROBERTS, a Senator from the State of Kansas, led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

**RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Kansas is recognized.

**SCHEDULE**

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, today the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 1 p.m. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1593, the cam-

paign finance reform bill. As a reminder to Members, two cloture motions were filed on the second pending amendment on Friday. Therefore, pursuant to rule XXII, those votes will occur on Tuesday, 1 hour after the Senate convenes, unless a consent agreement is reached to set those votes for a time certain. The majority leader has announced that the first vote today will occur at 5:30 p.m. It is hoped that the 5:30 vote, or votes, will be in relation to the amendments to the pending legislation. However, if votes regarding the campaign finance reform bill are not possible, the Senate will vote on any legislative or executive items available for action.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

Mr. President, I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

**RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

**MORNING BUSINESS**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be a period of morning business until the hour of 1 p.m. with the first 30 minutes under the control of the minority leader. After that time has expired, the last 30 minutes will be under the control of the majority leader or his designee.

The distinguished Senator from Wyoming is recognized.

Mr. THOMAS. Thank you very much.

**COMPLETING THE WORK OF THE SENATE**

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I wanted to come to the floor this morning and talk a little bit about where we are in the Senate, at least in my view, and where we are going. We are, of course, nearing the end of this session. Nobody knows precisely or exactly when we will be out of here, but it won't be long. We have to take a strong look, in my view, at what we have to do, and the things that are necessary to do. There are, of course, certain things that are required.

At this time of year, Congress maybe hasn't finished its annual ritual, but the fact is we have done a great deal. I am pleased with that. But we must, of course, finish the appropriations. The continuing resolution expires this week, but hopefully we will have the appropriations to the President. We will see what happens from there.

In addition to that, of course, I am very hopeful that at least one other issue will be undertaken, and that is to do something about the balanced budget amendment and the Medicare restrictions that are in place.

You might recall that Congress asked for some reduction in the cost of Medicare over a period of time to ensure a firming up in the fact that these dollars are being used as they should be. Unfortunately, the administration has reduced that spending almost twice what was anticipated and, therefore, I think it will be necessary for us to go back and do some things for all of Medicare and particularly, I might say, for rural areas and small hospitals in areas such as in Wyoming.

I think we have allowed ourselves to become a little bit off track. We have gotten involved in lengthy discussions of issues that are probably not particularly timely nor, indeed, perhaps even particularly appropriate, issues that did not need to be or were not ready to be discussed and debated this year and could well have been put off until another year. But, nevertheless, they have been discussed, and we are, in fact, still involved in some of those—the nuclear test ban treaty of course, being one of them. Now we are on campaign finance.

There have been extended debates brought about by the insistence of Members on the floor. We have also had a number of filibusters and threatened filibusters from the other side of the aisle in order to control what was occurring on the floor.

I haven't been here as long as have many Members of the Senate, but I can tell you I don't think that in the time I have been here I have seen such a contentious and combative situation. It is the most controversial session I believe—perhaps the most uncooperative—in terms of coming to terms with the things we need to do.

Our friends on the other side of the aisle, the Democrats, of course, have brought issues to the floor, and we have had a number of filibusters and threatened filibusters. I guess the most interesting was the latest nuclear test ban treaty debate in which there was an insistence that we come on the floor with it, and then there was a cry of